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RUEHJI/AMCONSUL JEDDAH PRIORITY 0420
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STATE FOR NEA, NEA/IPA, NEA/PPD

WHITE HOUSE FOR PRESS OFFICE, SIT ROOM
NSC FOR NEA STAFF

SECDEF WASHDC FOR USDP/ASD-PA/ASD-ISA
HQ USAF FOR XXXX
DA WASHDC FOR SASA
JOINT STAFF WASHDC FOR PA
CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL FOR POLAD/USIA ADVISOR
COMSOCEUR VAIHINGEN GE FOR PAO/POLAD
COMSIXTHFLT FOR 019

JERUSALEM ALSO ICD
LONDON ALSO FOR HKANONA AND POL
PARIS ALSO FOR POL
ROME FOR MFO

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E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [IS](#)

SUBJECT: ISRAEL MEDIA REACTION

SUBJECTS COVERED IN THIS REPORT:

- [1](#)1. Iran
- [1](#)2. Mideast

Key stories in the media:

HaQaretz and The Jerusalem Post quoted Secretary of State
Condoleezza Rice as saying yesterday that she would leave "no stone
unturned" in order to reach an Israeli-Palestinian peace deal before

leaving office, but conceded that time is running out. Speaking to a U.S. conference on Palestinian business and investment, Rice said she still hoped to reach the Bush administration's goal of a peace deal by the end of 2008, which was set at the Annapolis summit nearly a year ago.

Major media reported that, a day after Kadima and Labor signed a coalition agreement, Shas is hardening its line for its own negotiations. "The Labor-Kadima agreement distances Shas from entering the government," a senior Shas official was quoted as saying. The official also said that the senior status accorded Barak, and Labor's veto right for agenda issues, were a cynical attempt by the party to push through its worldview. Yediot quoted senior Kadima officials as saying that PM-designate Tzipi Livni is offering to allocate Shas half-a-billion shekels (\$1.8 billion). Leading media reported that some Labor Party members, including MK Ophir Pines-Paz, had mixed responses regarding the deal that saw few of their demands met. HaQaretz noted that a narrow coalition would face a dilemma: It would have to face a strong opposition, including Shas, Likud, and Yisrael Beiteinu, or go to elections.

Leading media reported that yesterday IDF soldiers shot dead a Palestinian youth who tried to throw a firebomb near the West Bank settlement of Beit El. The media reported that earlier yesterday, PA authorities informed Israel that Palestinian police discovered a 100-meter-long tunnel in central Hebron during the Jewish holiday of Sukkoth. HaQaretz reported that IDF engineers blew up the tunnel. The army is still investigating whether it was meant to facilitate a terror attack. On Monday HaQaretz quoted Palestinian sources as saying on Sunday that the PA is expected to deploy a battalion of security forces to Hebron on Friday.

HaQaretz's Avi Issacharoff visited the PA-run Nablus jail and found that the Fatah inmates have mellowed. On Monday, Yediot correspondents who visited with the Governor of Jenin brought back mixed impressions.

HaQaretz reported that yesterday the Syrian government condemned Israel over recent Jewish-Arab clashes in Acre, saying the violence was an Israeli attempt to drive Arabs out of the mixed city. "Israel is trying to frighten the Arabs in efforts to drive them out," wrote Tishrin, the official Syrian government newspaper. "This is additional proof that Israel hates Arabs and wants to 'purify' its territory from all Arab presence." Makor Rishon-Hatzofe reported that Hizbullah made a similar announcement. HaQaretz and The Jerusalem Post quoted the FPLP, which assassinated Israeli cabinet minister Rehavam Zeevi in 2001, as saying yesterday that it plans to kill right-wing MK Avigdor Lieberman. Lieberman wants to transfer Israeli Arab towns to Palestinian jurisdiction and annex large Jewish settlements in the West Bank. He termed the Acre riots a pogrom against Jews and the start of an Intifada inside Israel. The Jerusalem Post reported that U.S. performers were disappointed by the Acre Municipality's decision to cancel the Acre Festival of Alternative Israeli Theater in the wake of the riots in the city.

The Jerusalem Post reported that Hamas has launched an Internet site called AqsaTube, a file-sharing resource enabling users to upload videos. The newspaper quoted the Israeli Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center as saying that, while its format and design are similar to the popular YouTube site, the Hamas version is devoted entirely to propaganda and incitement. Makor Rishon-Hatzofe filed a similar report on Sunday.

On Sunday, Makor Rishon-Hatzofe reported that Palestinians have exploited the permits for picking olives to stage provocations against Jewish settlements in the Nablus area.

On Sunday The Jerusalem Post reported that last week the IDF denied entry into Gaza to a delegation of Israeli-Arab doctors affiliated with Physicians for Human Rights-Israel. They were supposed to perform operations and examinations and consult with patients.

The Jerusalem Post reported that yesterday Israel took a questionable attitude to a decree by Syrian President Bashar Assad that Damascus will establish a diplomatic mission in Beirut.

Leading media reported that on Sunday liberal novelist David

Grossman attended the dedication of a Torah scroll that was written in memory of his son, Uri Grossman, who fell during the Second Lebanon War. David Grossman stated his satisfaction that the ceremony could be held at the religious-Zionist Yeshiva of Netiv Aryeh in Jerusalem, which does not share his political views.

HaQaretz (Hebrew Ed.) bannered President Bush's plan to partly nationalize nine major banks.

11. Iran:

Summary:

Former Mossad director Ephraim Halevy wrote in the conservative, independent Jerusalem Post: QNo ally of Israel, however loyal and attentive, and the United States is just that, can act as a proxy in defining the sacrifice that Israel might be called to accept and then negotiate it with Iran in Israel's absence.

Block Quotes:

"The Major Diplomatic Challenges for the 21st Century"

Former Mossad director Ephraim Halevy wrote in the conservative, independent Jerusalem Post (10/12): QIsrael, a major player in the Middle East and a junior player on the international scene, must ensure that, as of now, it becomes an indispensable partner for any future coalition that is created to face down international existential threats whatever the method chosen to deal with them. One such case in hand is that of Iran, which constantly and loudly advocates putting an end to the existence of Israel as a sovereign and independent state. If all other options fail, the military one might evolve into the only one left Qon the table.Q he dangers for all parties in such a predicament do not require any further explanation. But should the QdiplomaticQ option take center stage, it is more than obvious that the items for negotiation will include interests that are most vital to Israel. Euphemisms like Qregional securityQ or Qregional hegemonyQ or guaranteeing Iran's security interests are inseparably bound up with the most acute necessities of Israel. Should Iran go for what is enticingly labeled the Qgrand bargain,Q it is unthinkable that this can be negotiated without Israel sitting at the table. No ally of Israel, however loyal and attentive, and the United States is just that, can act as a proxy in defining the sacrifice that Israel might be called to accept and then negotiate it with Iran in Israel's absence. This is the kind of challenge that diplomacy will face in the years to come. And Iran is but one example -- albeit a very major one -- of the intricate portfolios that await us. This, then, is our major diplomatic challenge for the 21st century.

12. Mideast:

Summary:

The Director of the Interdisciplinary Center's Global Research in International Affairs Center, columnist Barry Rubin, wrote in the conservative, independent Jerusalem Post: QWhat's the effective voice in the region? Not the Qpeace processQ concept used in talking with the West, but the QresistanceQ concept, used in talking among themselves.

Block Quotes:

1I. "Why the Middle East Is Sick"

The Director of the Interdisciplinary Center's Global Research in International Affairs Center, columnist Barry Rubin, wrote in the conservative, independent Jerusalem Post (10/13): QIn pursuit of its vendetta against Israel and the West, the Arab world is committing suicide -- not only the individual suicide of the terrorist, but the suicide of entire societies. On a daily basis, this means rejecting the reforms those societies need. In the long run, it means risking takeover by radical Islamists. The rest of the world, finding such talk incomprehensible, either thinks its meaningless jabber, or ignores it altogether. Surely the problem must stem from addressable grievances, fixable misunderstandings and emotional exaggeration? Unfortunately, this is all nonsense. What's the effective voice in the region? Not the Qpeace processQ concept used in talking with the West, but the QresistanceQ concept, used in talking among themselves.... How can the United States possibly tame a tiger trained and owned by others who both whip and feed it daily? What does it matter if Arab notables speak soothingly at diplomatic parties or in Western media interviews while millions at home are inundated by a very different message? Even if the tie-and-suit, polished-manners crowd are sincere, they dare not say the same thing to their people that they whisper into the ears of gullible foreigners.

II. "Acre Riots"

The Jerusalem Post editorialized (10/12): QWe have no sympathy with the band of Jewish youths [from Acre] who resorted to rioting when [the Arab driver Tawfik] Jamal made his appearance. What they should have done was to call the police while seeking safety if they felt genuinely threatened. The behavior of the Arabs involved, many screaming QItbah al-YahudQ [death to the Jews], disgusts us and is a reminder of how dangerously radicalized segments of the community have become. We urge the police to identify the lawbreakers and bring them to justice. Sadly, the usual political arsonists played their predictable roles. [Arab] MK Ahmed Tibi termed the Acre events a QJewish pogrom,Q while [right-wing] MK Ariele Eldad also played the QpogromQ card. Eldad further fanned the flames: QOne should not be surprised if Jews take up arms to defend themselves while the police do nothing to protect them.Q Tibi and Eldad, predictably, got it wrong -- as did local TV reports and several of the Friday Hebrew newspapers. Using the term QpogromQ in connection with Acre is an insult to the memories of the many Jews murdered in state-sponsored pogroms such as those organized by the Russian government in the 1880s. A correct Zionist response is to insist that Arab and Jewish citizens live by the same rules and obligations. Anyone who advocates vigilantism undermines the Jewish state and should be shunned.

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